

We are extending the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester until March 19<sup>th</sup> due to the snow days that we had accumulated during this trimester. The trimester change affects the instructional hours for the Unified Arts classes. The change will allow us to keep the days in each trimester equal.

The March 13<sup>th</sup> town elections will be held here in the gymnasium from 6:00AM to 8:00PM. In the best interest of continued security and safety for our students, school will not be in session that day as it is scheduled to be a Teacher Professional Development Workshop Day. Please remember that the entrance to the voting polls is through the gymnasium lobby. Parking spaces will be delineated for staff and voters. Voters should park towards the gymnasium lobby entrance at the rear of the building for easier access to the polls. Police officers will be directing traffic in the parking lot. Residents of Milford may register the day of elections at the polls. Please be sure to have proof of residency available if you plan to register at the poles.

Available on our website and mentioned in this month's newsletter are the Parent Placement Request letters. Every year we provide parents an opportunity to give input to their child's placement for the upcoming school year by providing us insight into their child's personality and learning style that may not be evident to the school staff. I ask that you do not request a specific team of teachers or a specific teacher in your letter. By providing us with additional information about your child it will assist us in determining the most appropriate placement for your child in the upcoming year. All letters are due to the main office by **April 16, 2018**.

Students are continuing to become independent learners as they move through the middle school to help prepare them for the high school and beyond. Each grade level increases the independent nature of the work and of the student's responsibility to help them transition successfully to the next phase in their education. Some students may take a little longer to develop their independence and that is okay too. Our goal is to assist students and to carefully guide them in becoming more independent and responsible for their education.

Students at all grade levels are anxious for the change in weather, the summer and anticipation of their upcoming grade change. By this point sixth grade students are pretty comfortable with the transition to the middle school and are comfortable with the academic demands and social interactions that the independence of this grade level gives to them. Students have begun to show us their independence and are more accountable to themselves for work and social interactions.

Seventh grade students continue to work on developing their social interactions and begin to rely more heavily on peers for support. Eighth grade students will be beginning the process of choosing their classes for high school. The high school guidance counselors will be meeting with the eighth grade this month. They will explain the choices available to the students to help them prepare for the transition.

Beginning at the middle school, students are given access to their grades and attendance through PowerSchool to help them develop ownership and responsibility for their education. Students are told by their teachers and by administration that they should be checking their grades a couple of times a month to make sure grades are current. Teachers are asked to use the following guidelines for entering grades; One (1) week for entering most grades including assignments turned in late and two (2) weeks for tests, projects, or reports. However some assignments may require more time to correct and enter. Late assignments may not necessarily follow these guidelines as entering current assignments is the priority.

Working collaboratively with parents is an important step to reinforce with students that home and school are jointly engaged in helping to guide them to continually develop their independence. This helps them prepare for what lies ahead of them educationally and in their future careers. We appreciate the support that we receive from the school community to help the students make good choices and be successful and achieve to their greatest potential.

Sincerely,

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